



Madison County Genealogical Society



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P.O. Box 1031, Norfolk, NE 68702-1031
mcgs@telebeep.com

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nemcgs/ www.nesgs.org/~mcgs

John McGrail, a Madison County pioneer and a man held in high esteem by the people of this county, died at his farm home in Warnerville precinct Sunday. The funeral was held at Battle Creek by Rev. Father Walsh Tuesday. Deceased was a native of Ireland and was 76 years old. His wife died twenty-seven years ago. He leaves two sons and three daughters to mourn the loss of a kind, good father. And so do the pioneers drop away even as the leaves from the tree but leaving behind the monuments of living deeds of faith, of heroism, of good work well done. Source: The Norfolk Press, Thursday, September 19, 1912, page 8.

40 YEARS A HERMIT "UNCLE JOHNNIE" DIES

QUAINT OLD CHARACTER OF YELLOW BANKS SUCCUMBS

LIVED ALL ALONE IN WOODS

John McKirahan, Who Settled All Alone in the Yellow Banks Many Years Ago, Dies at Foster---Funeral Will be Held Under the Big Elm.

Foster, Neb., Aug. 21,---Special to The News: John McKirahan, for forty years known as "Uncle Johnnie, hermit of the Yellow Banks," died here today at the home of Eugene Crook, the Foster banker, at whose home he had been for a year. He was an uncle to Mrs. Crook.

"Uncle Johnnie" owned the land on which the Yellow Banks are located, thirteen miles northwest of Norfolk. He settled there in the woods, on the bank of the Elkhorn, almost a half century ago and lived alone until settlers invaded.

Mr. McKirahan would have been eighty years of age next March. He had been feeble for some time and was tenderly cared for in the Crook home.

Pathetic Funeral Under Old Elm.

There will be a touch of pathos in the funereal of John McKirahan, which will be held Saturday morning at 10 o'clock beneath the "Big Elm" at the yellow Banks---the monster old tree near which this man settled in the days of the Indians and under whose protecting branches he lived in his own peculiar way, all alone, for more than two score summers and winters. There beneath the old elm the funeral services will be held. Burial will be in Jackson's cemetery, near by.

First Treasurer of Cuming County.

John McKirahan was the first treasurer of Cuming county, Neb. He came to Omaha in 1857 and to West Point in 1858. In 1862 he settled all alone in the Yellow Banks to live the life of the hermit in the woods and wilderness. He was born in Ohio.

In an early Indian raid he lost everything he had, the redmen taking everything they could get their hands on.

"Romance" Was Pure Fiction.

There used to be a tale that McKirahan had been disappointed in love and that was why he chose a hermit's existence. Relatives say this was pure fiction.

Source: The Norfolk Daily News, Friday, August 21, 1908, page 4.

Mrs. Lizzy Duncan McKiver, age 92, died Tuesday in Lincoln, Nebraska. Survivors were daughter, Mrs. Alta Kierstead; four grandsons, two granddaughters and one great granddaughter. Funeral services were held Friday in Lincoln with burial in the Wyuka Cemetery in Lincoln.

Source: excerpt from The Norfolk Daily News, Saturday, January 3, 1942, page 7.

Marsh McMillen Dies in Denver; Last Rites Here

Funeral services for Marsh McMillen, 79, former resident of Battle Creek who died in Denver, were held at the Methodist church here Wednesday afternoon with Pastor R. O. Louthan of Meadow Grove in charge. Burial was in the Osborn cemetery southwest of Battle Creek. Born in Virginia in 1867, Mr. McMillen came to Nebraska and located on a farm near Battle Creek. Later he moved to Cherry county and after spending a number of years in that section of the state he returned to Battle Creek and resided here until after the death of his wife, when he went to Denver to make his home with his son. His death in that city came after a long illness.

Accompanying the body here were the son, Andrew, and a grandson, the only immediate relatives surviving. Source: Battle Creek Enterprise, Thursday, October 31, 1946, page 1.

Nylotis Moats

Services for Nylotis Moats, 67, Norfolk, were held at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 6, at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Norfolk. The Revs. Frank Brink and Glen Gutz officiated with burial in Hillcrest memorial Park Cemetery. Visitation was 3-8 p.m. Wednesday at Home for Funerals in Norfolk.

She died Monday, Nov. 3, 2003 at the Methodist Hospital in Omaha.

The daughter of Fred and Erna (Melcher) Overhue was born March 20, 1936 at Norfolk. She was baptized April 4, 1937, at Zion Lutheran church in Pierce and confirmed May 10, 1949 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Osmond. She moved to Osmond with her family and graduated from Osmond High School. She attended Wayne State College and earned a teaching certificate. She taught rural school for two years.

She married M. L. "Mike" Moats on May 22, 1955, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Osmond. In 1957, they moved to Norfolk.

Mrs. Moats was a member of Mount Olive Lutheran Church and its ladies aid, Sunday school and church choir. She was also active with the Parent-Teacher Association, Food Pantry, Madison County Genealogical Society, Elkhorn Valley Historical Society and Good Time Bunch.

Survivors include her husband; four sons and their wives, Michael and Cindy of Omaha, Patrick of Twin Falls, Idaho, Douglas and Deb of Norfolk and Curtis and Sharon of Topeka, Kan; one daughter Nyla and Neil Heese; two sisters Donna Stutz of Peoria, Ill., and Marilyn Pruesker of Lincoln; 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Nylotis was a regular volunteer at the Museum Library and her smile and humor will be greatly missed.

Mike Moolick, Dies Suddenly at Home Here

For Number of Years was Norfolk's Most Consistent Globe Trotter

Funeral to be Monday

Started Traveling After He had Been Retired on Pension from Chicago and Northwestern Railway Company.

Mike Moolick, 85, for a number of years Norfolk's most consistent globe trotter, died suddenly of a heart attack while alone in his home 1401 South Fourth street, about 5:30 o'clock Friday afternoon. He was found a short time later.

Funeral services will be conducted Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock at the Berge-Thenhaus-Howser-Swoboda Home for Funerals by the Rev. Walter L. Jewett, minister of the First Methodist church. Burial is to be made in Prospect Hill cemetery. The body will lie in state at the home for funerals Sunday from 2 to 9 o'clock.

In an eleven-year period ending in 1936, Mr. Moolick traveled 197,997 miles. In the last four years he made a number of trips, including several to California.

Retired at 70

At the age of 70, he retired on a pension from the Northwestern Railway company, for which he worked thirty years and four months as a blacksmith. Before his retirement he had traveled little, because as he said: "I had a family of five to raise."

After his retirement he decided to realize his life-long ambition of going places and seeing things. "Why, if I had just settled down in my little home in Norfolk and done nothing, I would have been dead in six months," he once said.

After he started his traveling he visited Hawaii, Alaska, Cuba, Mexico, every province in Canada and every state in the union, except two in New England. He saw everything from the Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans to the Dionne quintuplets.

Mr. Moolick retired in June, 1924, and before the end of that year he had traveled 3,794 miles. In 1928, he traveled 14,000 miles.

His Travels Cost Little

He mastered the art of traveling with little cost. "People wonder how I can travel on so little money, and I wonder how people can spend as much money as they do when they travel," he once said. Upon arriving at his destination, he found a rooming house in which to stay, because "hotels are higher and have too much noise," he stated.

He is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Genevieve Wescott, Hampton, Ia.; Mrs. Lenora Griffith, Van Nuys, Calif.; Mrs. Louella Swails, Norfolk, and Mrs. Esther Miller, whose address is not known by relatives; one son, Harry, Norfolk, and six grandchildren.

Source: The Norfolk Daily News, Saturday May 25, 1940, page 5.

Funeral Record

Mike Moolick

Funeral services were conducted Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock at the Berge-Thenhaus-Howser-Swoboda Home for Funerals for Mike Moolick, 85; who died following a heart attack late Friday afternoon at his home, 1401 South Fourth street. The Rev. Walter L. Jewett, minister of the First Methodist church, officiated.

Mr. Moolick was born June 21, 1854, at Interlaken, in the Finger Lake district of New York state. He came to Nebraska with his parents, when 12 years of age and lived for a time in Saunders county. He freighted in the Black Hills in the early days and later took a homestead in Knox county.

In 1884, he was married to Miss Luella Etter, who died ten years later leaving three small daughters. Mr. Moolick was later married to Nellie Jones and to them two children were born.

Since his retirement from the service of the Northwestern Railway company for which he worked thirty years and four months as a blacksmith, he had traveled extensively, not only in the United States, but also in Hawaii, Alaska, Cuba, Mexico and Canada.

He is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Genevieve Wescott, Hampton, Ia.; Mrs. Lenora Griffith, Van Nuys, Calif., Mrs. Louella Swails, Norfolk and Mrs. Esther Miller, whose address is not known by relatives; a son, Harry Moolick, Norfolk, and six grandchildren.

Burial was in Prospect Hill cemetery.

Source: The Norfolk Daily News, Tuesday May 28, 1940, page 2.

MRS. NIES DIES.

Mrs. J. H. Nies of Meadow Grove, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Jackson, died Monday of heart trouble. Though Mrs. Nies had been in poor health for some time her condition did not become alarming until a few days before her death.

Mrs. Nies grew to womanhood in Madison county and has a great number of friends in this section of the state who received with regret the announcement of her demise. She is survived by the husband and one married son, the parents, and one brother, Will Jackson, all residing in or near Meadow Grove. BATTLE CREEK ENTERPRISE September 10, 1914 page 1

Mrs. Harry Niles, 67, Dies at Norfolk Home

Funeral services for Mrs. Harry Niles, who died at her home in Norfolk, were held at the Home for Funerals and burial was made in the Deer Creek Cemetery west of Battle Creek.

Mrs. Niles, whose maiden name was Carrie Craig, was born March 23, 1880. She spent her younger years in Battle Creek and was married to Harry Niles in 1900. Their home until recent years was on the Niles farm west of Battle Creek.

Surviving are her husband, the four sons, King, Redondo Beach, Calif., Ed., Mervin and Kenneth, all of Norfolk; one brother, Walter Craig, Inman; five sisters, Mrs. Olive Warner, Omaha; Mrs. J. W. DeMerritt and Mrs. Rhoda Decker both of Norfolk; Mrs. Elice Hailey, Seattle, Wash., and Mrs. John Gallagher, Inman; nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Source: Battle Creek Enterprise, Thursday, October 9, 1947, page 1.

Mrs. Drucilla Osborn died Sunday morning at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. L. Boyer. Burial was made at the Osborn Cemetery southwest of Battle Creek. She was born in Grayson county, Virginia on December 2, 1856. She reached the age of 78 years, 10 months and 11 days. She married Zachariah M. Osborn, May 10, 1877 and the two came to Madison county, Nebraska in 1883. Survivors were two sons and two daughters: Allen C., Clyde C., Mrs. W. L. Boyer, and Miss Maude Osborn. Also surviving were her brothers and sisters: Allen R., Robert L., Hoyt, Mrs. Alf Reeves, Mrs. J. M. McMillan, R. F., and Charles Osborn. Source: excerpt from Battle Creek Enterprise, Thursday, October 17, 1935, page 1.

Zack Osborn's Death

Zack Osborn, aged 42 years, died at 2:30 Wednesday morning at his home in Schoolcraft precinct, ten miles southwest of Battle Creek.

The announcement of his death came as a shock to Battle Creek people, not many even knowing that he was sick. He had been complaining with "la grippe" for about three weeks, but was able to be around and was in town last week. He was, apparently, a man of iron constitution and capable of great physical endurance, but the "grim destroyer's" summons came and had to be obeyed.

He was suffering from an attack of the grip, and from that alone he would undoubtedly have recovered, but last Saturday another disease fastened upon him---the measles. The combination resulted in broncho-pneumonia, from which he died.

He was well-known throughout the country, having lived here a number of years. A wife and five children survive him. The funeral was held at the family residence in Schoolcraft this morning at 11 o'clock, conducted by Rev. A. M. McFarland.

Source: Battle Creek Republican, Battle Creek, Nebraska, Friday March 17, 1899. Page 1

(Grippe/grip was Influenza like symptoms.)

Another of Virginia Colony Answers Call

Weakened from a long illness and suffering with pneumonia contracted during the week, Mrs. Drucilla Osborn, a resident of Madison county over fifty years, died at 5:15 Sunday morning at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. L. Boyer, in Battle Creek.

Funeral services, largely attended by relatives from out of town, were held at the Methodist church at 2:30 Tuesday afternoon following brief services at the Boyer home. Rev. David Scott of Meadow Grove was in charge and the music was contributed by a quartet comprised of Miss LaRose Crowley, Mrs. Clara Baker, C. C. Zimmerman and M. G. Doering, with Miss Virginia Hackler as accompanist. Burial was made at the Osborn cemetery southwest of Battle Creek in the family lot where rest the husband and a daughter who died many years ago.

William Boyer, Jack and Glen Osborn, grandsons, and Joe Reeves, jr., Hoyt Osborn, jr., and Roy Rees were pallbearers.

Drucilla Osborn was born in Grayson County, Virginia, December 2, 1856, her age being 78 years, 10 months and 11 days. She was married in Virginia to Zachariah M. Osborn, May 10, 1877, and the two came to Madison County, Nebraska, in 1883, locating on a farm southwest of Battle Creek. About twenty-two years ago, Mrs. Osborn purchased residence property in Battle creek which remained her home until a few years ago when failing health made it advisable for her to make her home with her daughter. She was a devoted mother, and her early day sacrifices were well repaid in her declining years by the close companionship and tender care of daughters and grandchildren whose constant efforts were for her welfare and happiness.

Surviving are two sons and two daughters: Allen C. Osborn, Fairfield, Idaho, and Clyde C. Osborn, Mrs. W. L. Boyer, and Miss Maude Osborn, Battle Creek. Of the surviving five brothers and two sisters, Allen R., Robert L., and Hoyt Osborn, Mrs. Alf Reeves, and Mrs. J. M. McMillan are of Battle Creek. R. F. Osborn resides in Cherry County and Charles Osborn at Twin Falls, Idaho.

Among those from a distance attending the funeral were: Mrs. M. McIntosh, Mullen; Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Cox, Seneca; Mrs. Charles Hiscox, Armond Hiscox, and Mrs. Will Hiscox, Wayne, and Mrs. Abbie Brown of Moccasin, Montana.

Source: [Battle Creek Enterprise](#), Battle Creek, Nebraska, Thursday, October 17, 1935, page 1.

Terrible Railroad Accident

One Brakeman Killed Outright

Engineer Badly Mutilated

Engine, Tender and Five Loaded Freight Cars Completely Demolished.

Owing to the terrible rain of last Tuesday night, the Sioux City train over the C. St. P. M. & O. railroad, due here at 7:45 P. M., laid over at Wayne, which is thirty-five miles from this place, through fear that washouts might have occurred and would not be seen in the night. On their way in on the following morning, at about half past six o'clock and when they were about five miles out from Norfolk, they ran into a culvert or small bridge which had been completely washed from under the track, yet the rails and ties were still left in position so that the damage

was not noticed until too late to be avoided. The locomotive dropped directly into the opening; the tender and first freight car were completely demolished; the second car passed completely over all yet mentioned, reaching its full length upon the solid grading and then rolled upon its side into the ditch. The third car lay smashed above the engine, while the fourth and fifth were pitched right and left cross-wise of the track, each with one end in the water and the other reared high in air; both were very badly broken up. The locomotive is apparently completely destroyed.

Joseph Pheasant, the head brakeman, who at the time of the accident was riding in the cab with the engineer, was so completely buried up that his body was not recovered until about four o'clock in the afternoon. His injuries were such as would likely have caused death even had he not been held under water as he was. He was a resident of Norfolk and leaves a wife and six sons and daughters, one of whom is married.

Samuel T. Reed, engineer, was caught below one knee by some of the timbers of the floor of a car, and held in the water up to his chest until eleven o'clock when he was released. The leg below the knee was mashed to pieces, and also a portion of the foot. The left hand also sustained some injuries. During the whole time of this trying ordeal of four and a half hours duration, with one leg mashed and firmly held fast by timbers, and nearly the whole of his body under water which was very cold, Mr. Reed bore it all like a hero.

The fireman, at the time was outside at work upon the engine, and was thrown into the water and hurt by something striking him on the back. He was also badly strangled, but succeeded in making his way to the bank.

Word was at once sent to this place, when the U. P. engine, which was just starting out on its regular trip to Columbus, was recalled and with two box cars dispatched to the scene of the disaster and remained there until eleven o'clock when Mr. Reed was released and brought to town. A large number of our citizens went out on the special train, and when there all who could see where their services could be of any benefit turned in and worked with a zeal that was commendable. Especially did the railroad boys exert themselves to the utmost, getting into the water frequently up to their necks, in their efforts to free the imprisoned foot of the unfortunate engineer. This, however, could not be done with all the power that could be brought to bear upon the obstruction, until the U. P. engine was backed up and hitched to the same with their cable and hooks, which had the desired effect and the poor fellow was set at liberty. A shout of joy went up from the crowd, but the recollections of the victim still undiscovered suppressed any great demonstrations. Mr. Reed was at once placed upon the train and brought to town, and in the afternoon Drs. Bear and Richards amputated the leg below the knee.

On Thursday at 12 o'clock an inquest was held by Coroner Tanner and a verdict rendered to the effect that Joseph Pheasant came to his death by being crushed about the hips and drowning. The extent of each cause the jurors were unable to decide. Following are the names of the jurors: Herman Pasewalk, J. A. Light, D. S. Crow, Louis Sessions and J. C. Morey. Source: Norfolk Journal, Friday May 11, 1883, page 3.

Last Tuesday night we were visited with the heaviest fall of rain which this country has experienced in several years. For about two hours and a half the rain fell in torrents, until the whole surface of the ground was literally covered with water. How many railroad washouts this will be the cause of it is hard to tell, but at this writing (Wednesday P.M.) we have the accident on the St. Paul road, of which we give an account elsewhere, and the morning train due here from Creighton, still stands on the track two miles north of town, with a washout of one hundred and fifty yards of grading which will have to be replaced. Passengers will be transferred by a special train sent up that far from the lower depot.

Later---The above mentioned break has been repaired so that trains are now making their customary runs. Source: Norfolk Journal, Friday May 11, 1883, page 3.

Charles Ransom, conductor on the wrecked train where Reed and Pheasant lost their lives, was quite sick for several days afterward from the effects of working in the water at that time. He is now out and around again, though not able to resume his place on the train.

We hear of a railroad accident which happened between Blair and Omaha last Monday which was very similar to the one between here and Wayne, of which we gave an account last week. In this case the engineer, named Getty, brother of our fellow townsman, was scalded to death.

Samuel T. Reed, the unfortunate engineer on the smashup of the St. Paul train last week, died on Friday night at half-past ten and was buried on Saturday. He leaves a mother and several children, his wife having died in Iowa a few years ago. He was about thirty-three years of age.

Card of Thanks

The undersigned respectfully takes this method of expressing her sincere thanks to friends, neighbors and citizens for their kindness, sympathy and aid in the time of affliction. Mrs. Joseph Pheasant. Source: Norfolk Journal, Friday May 18, 1883, page 3.

Card of Thanks

A card of thanks is most heartily rendered by the family of S. T. Reed to all those who assisted and sympathize with us over our grief and great loss. The memory of them will ever be cherished in the hearts of the remaining members of his household. M. J. Reed. Source: Norfolk Journal, Friday May 18, 1883, page 3.

The St. Paul train was obliged to return to Norfolk Wednesday morning on account of several washouts on the road occasioned by the heavy rain of the night before. One of the washouts was at the bridge where Reed and Pheasant, lost their lives in the wreck a few weeks ago. Source: Norfolk Journal, Friday June 22, 1883, page 3.

John Creed Phipps

An invalid for several years and helpless for many weeks, John Creed Phipps was relieved of his sufferings when he passed away Sunday, February 27, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. M. R. Hackler, in Battle Creek. Following funeral services which were conducted by Rev. A. A. Kerber at the Methodist church, interment was made at the family lot in the Schoolcraft cemetery southwest of Battle Creek.

Mr. Phipps was a native of Virginia, being born in that state July 21, 1846. His age at death was 81 years, 7 months and 6 days. At the age of eighteen years he enlisted in the Confederate army and was with General Lee when that general surrendered and accepted the terms of General Grant. Returning to his old home, he was married to Miss Mollie J. Osborn, who died in Battle Creek in September, 1917. The family came to Madison County, Nebraska, and located on a farm which they occupied until 1900, when they became residents of Battle Creek. Friends from various parts of the county were here to pay last respects to an honored Virginian whom they had known and respected for many years.

Surviving are three daughters, Mrs. J. L. Dufphey, and Mrs. M. R. Hackler of Battle Creek, Nebraska, and Mrs. R. J. Dufphey of Haley, Idaho. There are three grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Mrs. J. C. Phipps Passes Away

Succumbs After Long Illness---Funeral Thursday---Long a Resident of Madison County.

Mrs. J. C. Phipps, long a resident of Madison County, passed away Tuesday morning at the home in south Battle Creek. Mrs. Phipps had been suffering for a long time with a complication of diseases from which no relief could be found. She was past sixty-five years old and aside from the husband is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Lawrence Dufphey of Tilden, Neb., Mrs. Richard Dufphey residing in Idaho, and Mrs. M. R. Hackler of Battle Creek.

Funeral services were held in Battle Creek this (Thursday) morning and interment was made at the Osborn Cemetery in Schoolcraft precinct. Further details will be given in the Enterprise next week.

Source: Battle Creek Enterprise, Battle Creek, Nebraska, Thursday, September 27, 1917, page 1.

Funeral of Mrs. Phipps

Funeral services for Mrs. J. C. Phipps, who passed away at her home in Battle Creek on Tuesday of last week, were held at the M. E. church Thursday morning and were conducted by Rev. Harper of Madison. After the services at the church the remains, followed by a large number of relatives and friends, were taken to the Osborn cemetery in Schoolcraft precinct and there interred.

Deceased, whose maiden name was Mollie Osborn, was born in Grayson, County, Virginia, March 14, 1851, and nineteen years later was married in that state to J. Creed Phipps. She came to Nebraska with her family in 1885, locating on a farm southwest of Battle Creek. All who knew Mrs. Phipps can testify to her Christian character, her cheerful, helpful life. Her devotion as a wife, mother and sister, her kindness to everybody, will linger as a fragrant memory in the home which her presence brightened and which death has now darkened. Aside from the husband and a number of brothers and sisters, Mrs. Phipps is survived by three daughters, Mrs. J. L. Dufphey of Tilden, Neb., Mrs. M. R. Hackler of Battle Creek, and Mrs. R. J. Dufphey of Hailey, Idaho.

Source: Battle Creek Enterprise, Battle Creek, Nebraska, Thursday, October 4, 1917, page 1.

Terrible Railroad Accident

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Engine, Tender and Five Loaded Freight Cars Completely Demolished.

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